

**Report from the Multicultural Issues Plank
Washington State Summit of Mental Health Consumers & Survivors
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Prior to their discussion, this small group established ground rules for the group to utilize to ensure respect was maintained for each person's viewpoints. The group was then led by Eric in a discussion around what multicultural personally means to each individual. Responses included:

- Growing up in a liberal family
- Being transgendered
- All cultures have value; being open to all types of people
- Understanding how the culture you were raised in affects you
- Member of the Yakima Tribe
- Ethnicity, race, gender, age, religion. Anything that that is unique about you that makes you different from others.

The report from the Multicultural Issues Plank was quite extensive and impressively thorough. In addition to producing four cohesive and tangible outcomes, strategies and measurements, the group agreed on the following Consensus Statement:

We demand nonjudgmental treatment by service providers that respect individual diversity. We support mental wellness and diversity awareness for all. There must be mental health assessments that value abilities and not disabilities. Multicultural means embracing wide diversity including urban and rural issues and attitudes on mental health and wellness. There should be high quality mental health care for all who need it, regardless of culture and this care must not be limited by inadequate levels of funding. There must be an end to any preferred treatment based on artificial criteria. There is a strong need for more providers of mental health services that share the ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds of the community they serve, where appropriate.

Outcome # 1: Peer support counselors in every county that reflect the culture of the population and allows for flexible outreach and education.

Strategies/Next Steps:

1. Identify the diverse cultures of each county
2. survey groups for input on diversity of peer support counselors
3. Increase training opportunities, training sites and testing sites in order to shorten waiting list
4. Advocate for funding for existing and new peer support counselors
5. The number of peer counselors in each county should reflect the ratio of the population

Measurement:

1. 100% funding for all peer support counselors by 2010
2. Each county should have significant number of diverse paid peer counselors by 2010
3. State allocates annual funds in budget for peer support counselors by 2010

Outcome # 2: Create positive messages for mental wellness and mental health issues throughout the state targeted towards diverse and multicultural communities through television, radio and the print media.

Strategies/Next Steps:

1. Advocate for funding from all sources for positive mental health wellness campaign
2. Seek positive role models for messages and seek guidance from consumers and their families on how to tailor messages
3. Consumer board for ideas on messages
4. Make sure campaign messages are multicultural and multilingual
5. Partner with as many organizations as possible for distribution, support, ideas, strategies (state, school districts, tribes, military, LGBT, etc)

Measurement:

1. Public awareness campaign launch by the end of 2007 (Phase I)
2. Five campaign messages by 2010 – various media audio/print/visual
3. Survey consumers and the public on campaign messages to see if the campaign has positively influenced their awareness of multicultural health issues

Outcome # 3: Hold an annual statewide conference on multicultural issues and mental health. Provide scholarships and transportation allowing all diverse groups to attend.

Strategies/Next Steps:

1. Organize and plan for 1st conference by 2008
2. Organize to select speakers, sites, scholarships, logistics, etc
3. Seek various funding for sources (e.g. private, state, foundations, pharmaceutical)
4. Ongoing planning for annual conferences, e.g. 2008 committee, 2009 committee
5. Start recruiting committee planning members
6. Earmark separate funding for annual conference

Measurement:

1. First conference in 2008 – next in 2009 and 2010
2. Survey conference attendees for input on what worked, didn't work and what is needed
3. Themes should change yearly – measure attendance for increases in numbers media coverage

Outcome # 4: Provide for education and training for police and first responders on how to interact with and treat consumers of diverse cultures and backgrounds with respect and dignity. A mechanism should be established and put in place to assist families when the consumer is in crisis. Part of this mechanism may include training for police and first responders on ways to provide support and counseling to families and consumer supports.

Strategies/Next Steps:

1. Outreach and advocacy to police/first responders
2. Seek out those with an interest in working with this population –cross jurisdictional issues need to be addressed for native American tribes
3. Evaluate the need in each county-get consumers and family input on what training would look like
4. Make sure diverse cultures are included in the evaluation
5. Survey diverse community members on their experiences with police and first responders
6. A mechanism should be established and put in place to assist families when a consumer is in crisis. This must include culturally appropriate outreach and services to families

Measurement:

1. By 2008 10% of all police and first responders in each county would have at least some level of diverse/multicultural training
2. Training given to consumers and families on what to expect from police and first responders by 2008